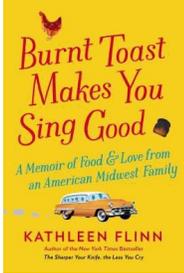


Books by the Stack



Burnt Toast Makes You Sing Good by Kathleen Flinn

A family history peppered with recipes, this book offers a humorous and flavorful tale spanning three generations. Kathleen Flinn shows how meals can be memories, and how cooking can be communication.

Why you'll like it: *20th century Americana, family memoir, recipes included, Michigan author.*

About the Author: Kathleen Flinn has been a writer and journalist for nearly twenty years. Her work has appeared in the Chicago Tribune , Chicago Sun-Times , USA Weekend , Men's Fitness and many other publications. She is a proud member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals, the American Society of Journalists and Authors, and the Author's Guild. She divides her time between Seattle and southwest Florida.

Questions for Discussion

1. *Burnt Toast Makes You Sing Good* is a “memoir of food and love from an American Midwest family.” In what ways does food tie families together and carry on tradition? Was food a big part of your family growing up, or in your own family now?
2. Why do you think memoirs, and memoirs about food, are so popular? Discuss some of your favorites.
3. The Flinn family struggled financially in their early years. In order to celebrate birthdays properly (and on a budget), Kathleen’s mother would give each child a “Birthday Menu,” making whatever meal they requested. Did your family have any similar traditions that didn’t break the bank, but meant something special?
4. How much do you know of your own ancestry? Did reading this memoir make you wonder about your own background and how it might have shaped who you are today?
5. Kathleen Flinn interviewed her mother and other family members, and conducted extensive research to write this memoir. Was she successful in bringing the past to life on the page? In what ways? Who were your favorite “characters”?
6. How do you think Flinn’s family and background served her well in becoming a writer, and how have they informed her passion for food?
7. Flinn’s father was a military man, and honor was a guiding principle of his life. In what way did his honor influence certain decisions for him and his family? What other values were important to the Flinn parents that they tried to instill in their children?

- 8.** The book is full of hilarious family anecdotes, from the origin of the title to Flinn’s mother accidentally locking herself in the chicken coop. Did any of these stories stand out more than others? Why? What lessons did some of these stories teach?
- 9.** History plays an important role through generations of the author’s family—the Great Depression, the reliance of many family members on employment at large automobile factories in the Midwest, and wars that members of Flinn’s family fought in. How do these big events shape them on a personal level?
(Questions provided by publisher)



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